Faith and Philosophy: Journal of the Society of Christian Philosophers

Volume 23 | Issue 4 Article 8

10-1-2006

Helm & Crisp, JONATHAN EDWARDS: PHILSOPHICAL THEOLOGIAN

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between Christ's divine and human nature. Cyril's concern for the unity of Christ's person are well known; he rejects this type of solution, holding that the unity of the person Christ allows that the human attributes of Jesus can also be attributed to the divine so that it is appropriate to say that in Christ, God suffers. Gavrilyuk develops the nuances of this position far more than can be elaborated here; however, Cyril's position ends up being something like this: God does not suffer in the divine nature or "nakedly" (*gymnos*). However, in the person of Christ, God does allow sufferings to come upon him and truly to become God's own. In Christ's divine self-limitation it can be said that God suffers. Suffering then is part of the economy of God's relation to the world rather than an expression of divine nature.

Gavrilyuk's book joins other recent books arguing for qualified passibility adding historical nuance to positions that have perhaps been both mischaracterized and unfairly dismissed. Gavrilyuk's book effectively undercuts much of the historical case against qualified impassibility and here the work shines brightest. Championing the orthodox case, he recovers a viable aspect of the tradition. However, since the book ends with Cyril it does not set up a dialogue with the most notable proponent of contemporary thought on the issue of God's suffering, Jurgen Moltmann. Gavrilyuk's book sets the stage for a comparison between Moltmann and Cyril. One question begs to be addressed: is Cyril's picture of the suffering of God in Christ an adequate response to the sufferings of the modern world? Gavrilyuk presents us with the tantalizing notion that this modern quandary has a rich, fruitful response dwelling within the Christian tradition.

Jonathan Edwards: Philosophical Theologian, edited by Paul Helm and Oliver D. Crisp. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2003. Pp. xvi and 165. $99.95 (cloth), $29.95 (paper).

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Given the relative lack of philosophical attention amid the more general proliferation of scholarship in the humanities on Edwards, the efforts of the ten contributors to this collection of essays are timely. Published on the tercentenary date of Edwards' birth, the introduction to the collection states that it addresses the need for further reflection on the possible nexus of theologians' and philosophers' work on Edwards. The collection, in my judgment, begins to fulfill this need, though in a piecemeal and limited manner. Quite apart from its overall impact, *Jonathan Edwards: Philosophical Theologian* contains a number of individual essays of significant interest to those concerned with philosophical and systematic theology. The collection contains essays that consider a variety of traditional theological doctrines and philosophical topics. Some of the essays concern historical or hermeneutic clarification, while others deal with the constructive task of defending or critiquing Edwardsian positions.

Jonathan Kvanvig's and William Wainwright's essays address Edwards and the doctrine of hell. Both authors agree with Edwards that the heart of the best defense of the traditional doctrine turns on a judgment about the significance of the status of the one wronged in sin, such that since the offended is infinitely great and good, a wrong done against such status merits infinite punishment. Kvanvig's essay focuses on whether Edwards offered a persuasive defense of the claim that all sin is in fact a sin against God, thereby securing one of the key premises in the argument about status. If, for example, one does not think one believes in God, is it appropriate to say that God is nevertheless an object of one's actions, and that one's actions should be described as offenses against God? Kvanvig's partial answer to such questions draws on the implications of what he calls Edwards' doctrine of divine conservation. He concludes that "[b]ecause of the intimate dependence, complete and total, of things on God, harm to the created order automatically constitutes an offense against the being on whom this order completely depends." (p. 9) Kvanvig's conclusion strikes me as correct, although two provisos ought to be issued. First, it seems to me that Edwards' conception of the relation between God and things that are not God, as described in works such as *End of Creation*, is much more theologically rich and complex than Kvanvig's conclusion indicates, and that this conception might deepen the account that Kvanvig begins to develop. Second, Kvanvig's answer deals with only one aspect—what might be called the objective pole—of the question with which he begins. As he notes in his conclusion, issues concerning moral psychology and related issues concerning how best to describe actions remain to be addressed.

Whereas Kvanvig's account of Edwards on hell is tightly focused and somewhat narrow, Wainwright's account is more wide-ranging and touches on more trajectories of argument. He defends some of Edwards' claims and criticizes others. Among the topics addressed, he attempts to defend the status principle—the claim that sin is damnable because of the unique status of the one sinned against—against a number of objections, he tackles questions about whether one can separate sinners from their sin, and touches on the issue of whether because some of the undeserving are saved from hell it is therefore an unfair punishment meted out by a God of limited mercy. Most importantly, Wainwright argues that Edwards is correct to conclude that God must display certain attributes that oppose sin, and that hell is one possible manifestation of such actualized opposition. However, Wainwright also offers two lines of critique of Edwards' position. First, he suggests that there are problems with the fairness of the doctrine, arguing that it would be more merciful and just as appropriate to God's hatred of sin, if sin and unredeemed sinners were simply annihilated instead of being punished eternally. The second line of critique that he sets in motion suggests that the doctrine of hell may give rise to troubling theological and philosophical implications about the nature of God. On this front, he discusses the relative merits of different metaphors such as bridegroom, father, king, and he also mentions that hell may imply that God has "hated" certain persons from eternity. Both trajectories of critique raise questions and rely on theological premises that are unexplored in the essay, presumably due to limitations of space.

Since concerns with Edwards' occasionalism resurface through a number of the essays, Oliver Crisp's discussion of how best to interpret Edwards' diverse statements about the conservation relation between God and the world is a key contribution to the collection. Crisp carries out three different tasks: (1) he delineates the spectrum of views about conservation and the place of secondary causation that extend from strong conservation theses to continuous creation theses to theses of occasionalism; (2) he discusses how Edwards' thought can contribute to various contemporary debates about how persons persist through time, clarifying how accounts of perdurantism and endurantism might be related to accounts of dense and discrete time; and (3) he contests Sang Lee's attempt to argue that Edwards, on the basis of statements in the *Miscellanies* about natural laws, adopted a continuous creation thesis as opposed to an occasionalist one. Crisp does not much explore, however, the theological purposes that Edwards may have thought his arguments for occasionalism served, and the difference such purposes might make.

Like Crisp's essay, Paul Helm's argument deals with Edwards' occasionalism, though he is more explicitly focused on its relation to an insight into personal identity that he believes Edwards gleaned from John Locke, namely that personal identity need not be grounded in some kind of simple and imperishable soul, but can be understood as an overlapping continuity of mental states, centered on an awareness of unity of mental organization across time. Locke's account possesses an admirable "forensic focus," that Helm seems to approve of for both its epistemological modesty—"memory is a rough and ready forensic tool; no more" (p. 48)—and the way it enables one to give a metaphysical account of mental unity that includes both immanent causation and a world of fluid relations and change. Yet, according to Helm, Edwards' commitment to occasionalism and divine immediacy "neutralized and sterilized" the promise of Locke's arguments. The critical problem for Helm revolves around the absence of a place for immanent causation in either the discernment of or the constitution of the unity of mental organization that Lockean personal identity requires. "[S]ince for Edwards there is no fact of the matter (as far as the connection of the present with the past is concerned) apart from the will of God, there can be no memories, in the strict sense; for a person can remember only what is true. And though, if I am an Edwardsian, I may remember having a shower, I cannot truly remember having it, for whoever had the shower, it wasn't me." (p. 58)

While I found Helm's argument thought-provoking, I was not convinced that Helm makes his point precisely enough. To begin with, it is unclear whether what Helm calls Locke's "forensic focus" is primarily an epistemological or a metaphysical boon. The most plausible interpretation, it seems to me, must be the metaphysical one. And though Helm quite correctly raises the question of how Edwards' metaphysical commitments are related to his theological ones, I was not confident that he pursued the question far enough. It seems correct to say that on the Edwardsian position, the showering Helm isn't a person who endures across time instead of perduring, and he certainly isn't an "autonomously self-perpetuating" subject, the mere product of immanent causation. Yet, surely the key conditional clause in Helm's example is "apart from the will of God." Thus, the conclusion—that Helm cannot truly remember having showered, because it wasn't he that showered—ought to be

qualified by the condition, "apart from the will of God." In the absence of some analysis of what this clause means, of course it is difficult to understand how true identity could be maintained; in the absence of an account of how divine being and willing make *truth* possible, of course there are no *true* connections between time-slices. And this point, for me raises a much larger question: Should it be surprising that in the absence of a great deal more *theological* reflection, Edwards' *philosophical* reflections on personal identity appear unsatisfactory?

Hugh McCann's essay attempts to untangle Edwards' acute perceptions about certain aspects of willing and their relation to a theology of divine sovereignty from what he believes to be Edwards' unconvincing argument against every aspect of the Arminian concept of freedom. The reconstructed libertarian concept of freedom that McCann wishes to defend is limned of the claim that freedom consists in an agent bringing her own acts into existence, *ex nihilo*, as it were. (The implausibility of such a view, of course, is one point that Edwards never tires of hammering home in *Freedom of the Will*.) However, according to McCann, one of Edwards' most important claims about freedom—that it is nothing more than the ability to act according to the strongest desire of the will—is both inadequate and potentially misleading. In order to show how this claim is potentially misleading, McCann provides some valuable and careful analysis of arguments about willing, desiring and choice, which, at the very least, advance current discussions of Edwards' work.

McCann argues toward two conclusions. First, he argues that a persuasive libertarian account of freedom is available that has room for less ambitious kinds of non-caused self-origination that distinguish choices from natural causal relata, helps define the spontaneity that makes free choices distinct from other relata, and makes moral responsibility possible. Second, he argues that this account of freedom does not threaten Edwards' commitment to divine sovereignty, because God's causation and conservation of the world ought not to be understood as competing with natural causes. "The best way to view divine creation is to treat it as akin to human creation: to hold that instead of being consequences of God's will as creator, we and our actions are the *content* of his will, in much the way the characters and events of a novel are the content of the author's imagination." (p. 41) On this construal, the author transcends her characters, she does not compete with them. Thus, if I understand McCann correctly, what appears in Edwards' thought to be either determinism or compatibilism is more defensible if it is understood as a distinctively theological claim, not at all similar to, say, Locke's compatibilism, which isn't concerned with the difference theological considerations make for philosophy.

Philip Quinn's contribution suggests that philosophers can find an important and original contribution to virtue theory in the first chapter of Edwards' treatise on *True Virtue*. Quinn's article consists of three parts: an endorsement of the promise of understanding moral virtue in aesthetic terms, a re-presentation (with one very minor revision) of the argument of the first chapter of *True Virtue*, and an argument about whether it can be instructive to construe the argument of the first chapter in purely philosophical and non-theological terms. While the argument is clear and probably correct as far as it goes, in my opinion, it is also the case that Quinn does

not face up to some of the larger ontological problems that are implicated in *True Virtue*—such as how to understand the relation between being and beauty—that have appropriately bedeviled interpreters of Edwards for ages. Among the essays by the theologians, the one most interesting to philosophers is likely to be Amy Plantinga Pauw's investigation of divine simplicity. Edwards' emphasis on excellency and beauty as fundamental concepts for thinking about the divine, which are essentially relational and pluralistic (and more specifically Trinitarian) according to Plantinga Pauw, puts him in contrast to much of the theological tradition's advocacy of simplicity. The issue raised in this essay is provocative; I found myself wishing that the author had been even more ambitious and taken up a more detailed comparison with one of simplicity's advocates. In addition to the essays mentioned above, the collection also contains Michael McClymond's essay on Edwards, Gregory Palamas and the uses of theological platonism, Stephen Holmes' essay on Sang Lee's claim that Edwards has a dispositional ontology, and Gerald McDermott's essay comparing Edwards and John Henry Newman on the status of non-Christian religions.

In conclusion, the editors are certainly correct in noting the need for more attention to the relation between philosophers of religion and theologians who are interested in Edwards' philosophical theology, and I believe the book should count as a success in beginning to address this need. There are two ways that it might have been even more successful. First, it would have been nice if the authors would have engaged more with the few other thinkers, such as Stephen H. Daniel, who have given book length analyses of Edwards' philosophical theology. Further, in a book with contributions from this many first rate philosophical minds, it would have been instructive to read more explicit reflection on the challenges of bridging the tasks of theology and philosophy, and how Edwards' work might represent an instructive moment in the history of Western thought for building such bridges. Nonetheless, this further work will be much easier for others to pursue with this collection of essays in hand.

Jonathan Edwards and the Metaphysics of Sin, by Oliver D. Crisp. Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2005. Pp. x, 146. $89.95.

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Rather than an over-arching reading of Edwards's metaphysics, Crisp offers detailed critical analysis of several Edwardsian doctrines broadly related to sin. His method is not 'rational reconstruction', since he finds many of Edwards's positions and arguments inadequate. Instead, Crisp adopts what Jonathan Bennett calls the 'collegial approach' to the history of philosophy: "one studies the texts in the spirit of a colleague, an antagonist, a student, a teacher—aiming to learn as much philosophy as one can from studying them."[1] This review will consider Crisp's book in the same spirit, and draw a similar verdict as Crisp draws about Edwards's metaphysics of sin: imperfect but instructive.